

Focus #1: Introduction and background

Focus #1: Ten Important Insights Basic to a Proper Understanding of the Life of Christ

1. In His incarnation, Jesus took upon Himself genuine human nature. Thus, except at those relatively occasional times when the Holy Spirit directed Jesus to access His divine attributes, He lived out His life under the actual and real limitations intrinsic to unfallen humanity.
2. Jesus’ ministry of 32 years included two distinguishable emphases: Public Presentation (22 years of presenting Himself to Israel as her Messiah, saturating the land with His claims, working miracles to authenticate those claims) and Private Preparation (of His disciples for the fact of His death).
3. Throughout His public ministry, Jesus made two explicit claims concerning Himself: He claimed to be the Messiah of Israel, and He claimed to be God come in the flesh. The claim to Messiahship was cleverly encoded to appeal to Jews but to appear innocuous to the Roman overlords. The claim to deity was couched in the most compelling and careful figures and terms.
4. The purpose of Jesus’ many miracles was to prove true His remarkable claims concerning Himself. Thus, miracles were the most dominant during the period of Jesus’ ministry when He was working to present Himself to Israel as her Messiah. The greatest of the miracles wrought by Jesus, and thus the miracle with the most dramatic and important vindicating force, was His own bodily resurrection from the grave on the third day after His death and burial.
5. The rejection of Jesus’ claims was not a matter of confusion, but of rebellion. Official rejection came early and grew steadily until it exploded in the crucifixion. On the other hand, popular rejection came later and was much more subtle, so much so that only Jesus had the insight to recognize the true heart of the multitudes.
6. Throughout His ministry, Jesus employed a remarkable strategy to unmask the superficial and hypocritical nature of the public adulation paid Him by the multitudes: when confronted by shallow pseudo-offers of acceptance, He would speak hard words-- words which demanded a choice, the morally right choice being indicative of obedience/belief, but also involving a serious price to be paid by the one making that choice. Usually, this demand was that they reject the Pharisees (and specifically, the Pharisaic doctrine of righteousness by works) in order to accept His claims.
7. Jesus never explicitly spoke of His death until within months of the event; when He did speak of it, nobody accepted it, especially the apostles. This unwillingness to accept Jesus’ plain and oft-repeated statements seems to have been a function of two influences: first, the apostles were crippled by the popular rabbinic misperception of the Messianic hope, which had little or no room for a suffering or dying Messiah; second, the apostles were greedy for the chief places in the kingdom which Jesus had promised them, and they didn’t want to hear about suffering by Him or by them.
8. Jesus remained a wildly popular folk-hero--the object of almost universal popular fascination--until the last week of His mortal life. Indeed, that popularity crescendoed until it collapsed climatically on Tuesday of the Passion Week. This enduring and increasing popular fascination impacted Jesus’ ministry in three very important ways:
 - a. It deceived the apostles and disciples of Jesus, persuading them that in fact Jesus’ claims were being broadly accepted, and thus making it difficult for those disciples to accept His prediction that He would die at the hands of the leaders of Israel.
 - b. It enabled Jesus to escape the murderous hatred of His official enemies; they longed to take Him, but they could not because they “feared the multitude.”
 - c. It forced Jesus’ enemies to contrive to get Him on the cross before the town woke up on Friday; however, when the town did awake, the Sanhedrinists were amazed and delighted that the populace had suddenly turned against Jesus.
9. Throughout His ministry, but especially as His Passion approached, Jesus demonstrated Himself to be “wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.” In at least three specific and identifiable ways, Jesus orchestrated the events of His passion so that it would unfold precisely how and when the Father intended it to.
 - a. By means of the raising of Lazarus and then the route He took to Jerusalem, Jesus set the stage for the Triumphal Entry, exciting the city about His arrival, and then alerting them as to the moment of His arrival.
 - b. By means of the second cleansing of the Temple on Monday, Jesus deliberately galvanized Pharisaic and Sadducean hostility; once those two sects had united in their murderous hatred of Jesus, it took them only five days to get Him on a cross.
 - c. By means of His carefully maintained popularity with the masses, Jesus insured that the Sanhedrinists would have to involve the Romans in His execution, and thus that He would die not by stoning but by being “lifted up” in crucifixion.
10. Jesus’ followers did not expect Him to die. Indeed, they were not spiritually required to trust in His death until after that death—and the subsequent resurrection—had occurred.

Focus #2: Chronological Survey of the Three and a Half Year Ministry of Jesus Christ

Jesus' life before His public ministry began		about 30 yrs	BIRTH and SILENT YEARS Jesus' nativity, infancy, boyhood, young adult & early adult life
The 3 ½ Year Public Ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ	PUBLIC PRESENTATION		
	Time: 22 years --seeking crowds --working countless miracles --traveling throughout the lands of the Jews, saturating the area with His claims, and with the proof of those claims by means of miracles	3 - 5 months	THE OPENING OF THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF JESUS 1. The ministry of the forerunner, John the Baptist 2. The baptism and temptation of Jesus the Christ 3. The miracle of water to wine performed at Cana <i>Jesus demonstrates His glory for the first time.</i>
		about 8 months	THE EARLY JUDEAN MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST 1. Jesus cleanses the temple at Jerusalem during <i>Passover</i> season 2. Nicodemus, a seeking Sanhedrinist, comes by night to Jesus 3. Jesus gathers to Himself those who had already believed John's message 4. John the Baptist is arrested; Jesus departs for <i>Galilee</i> , passes through Samaria on the way, deals with the woman at the well
		18 months	THE GREAT GALILEAN MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST 1. Many, many miracles during this time 2. Jesus is seeking crowds, traveling throughout Galilee, saturating the land with His two-fold claim (to be <i>Messiah</i> , and to be <i>God</i> come in the flesh), proving the legitimacy of those claims by means of miracles 3. In spite of the undeniable proof Jesus offers in defense of the truth of His claims, Israel finally rejects Him and His offer; Jesus discerns that spirit of disbelief, His disciples/apostles do not . There are two great <i>moments of rejection</i> which bring this phase of Jesus' ministry to a close: a) The first moment of rejection--the unpardonable sin (Mt 12:14-37) b) The final moment of rejection--the feeding of the 5000 (Jn 6:41-47)
	PRIVATE PREPARATION		
Time: 1 year --seeking privacy --avoiding miracles --fleeing areas populated by Jews	6 months	TRAINING OF THE TWELVE Notice that Jesus' emphasis and tactics change dramatically at this point: 1. He had been seeking crowds; now He seeks privacy 2. He had been working miracles freely; now He seeks to avoid miracle-working in the attempt to avoid the consequent multitudes of people 3. He had been speaking openly and plainly; now He speaks in parables 4. He had been traveling throughout the land of the Jews; now He begins to move in non-Jewish territories (Syro-Phoenicia, Decapolis, Caesarea-Philippi) CULMINATION OF THIS PERIOD: 1. Jesus finally finds solitude with His apostles, openly <i>foretells His death</i> for the first time; the apostles are horrified and unbelieving 2. To reinforce the staggering faith of the apostles, Jesus is TRANSFIGURED before three of them	
A time of mixed focus: Jesus presents Himself to the people of Judea & Perea; but all the while continues to prepare His witless disciples for His death	6 months	IN AND AROUND JERUSALEM: THE FINAL SIX MONTHS BEFORE HIS PASSION 1. To Jerusalem, for the Feast of Tabernacles (Nov) [Luke 9:51; John 7:1-10:21] -- <i>then, ministers in Judea for final time, avoiding Jerusalem</i> 2. To Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication (Dec) [Luke 13:22; John 10:22-42] -- <i>then, to Perea (Jn 10:42), ministers until the sister of Lazarus send for Him</i> 3. To Bethany to raise Lazarus from the dead (ca Feb) [John 11] -- <i>to village of Ephraim, remains secreted until He sets out for final Passover</i>	
FINAL EVENTS			
Time: several weeks --Final trip to Jerusalem --Passion Week --Resurrection Ministry	Final Week; and then 40 days	JESUS' PASSION IN JERUSALEM, THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION 1. The final journey to Jerusalem; Jesus and His disciples travel to the city with a band of Passover pilgrims coming down from Galilee 2. The PASSION WEEK: Jesus dramatically enters Jerusalem (Sun), cleanses & possesses the temple (Mon/Tue), keeps Passover (Thur pm), then is arrested, tried, crucified and buried (Fri) 3. The RESURRECTION (early on first day of week), followed by a 40-day ministry on the earth 4. The ASCENSION to the Father from the Mount of Olives	

Focus #3: Two Events Preparatory to the Passion Week

Event #1: Some Pharisees try to lure Jesus back to Jerusalem (Luke 13:31-35)

- 4a. Ministering in the region beyond Jordan (Perea), where Jesus had fled to escape the dangers in Judea
- 2b. Teaching in Perea, Jesus is warned about Herod by some Pharisees; He rebukes them and laments the stubbornness of Jerusalem
 - 1) Some weeks earlier, Jesus had gone to *Perea* to escape the fury of the Judean Sanhedrinists.
 - 2) Some of those Sanhedrinists had come to Perea in an attempt to lure Jesus back to *Judea*, where they could more easily do Him harm.
 - 3) Jesus discerned the plot and refused to fall into their snare (13:32,33); then He mourned the hardness of the city of Jerusalem (13:34).
 - 4) Notice 13:35, and understand the promise Jesus made to those men at that time – several weeks *before* He came to Jerusalem for the Passover at which He would die!

Event #2: The raising of Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44)

5a To Bethany (on the outskirts of Jerusalem) for the raising of Lazarus

Note: This is the THIRD of 3 trips to Jerusalem or its environs during the 6 months immediately before the Passion Week (compare John 7:1; 10:22). This trip occurs sometime after the Feast of Dedication (Jn 10:22) and before the Feast of Passover (John 12:1).

By way of introduction to this miracle, the following observations may be made.

- [1] The raising of Lazarus was the only miracle in the Lord's ministry which was deliberately made more spectacular than it might have been.
- [2] The raising of Lazarus was of all our Lord's miracles the most thoroughly credible, supported by undeniable evidence.
- [3] The raising of Lazarus was clearly intended to supply the Jewish nation with one more incontrovertible proof of Jesus' Messianic claims.
- [4] The raising of Lazarus was God's way of beginning to prepare the nation for the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

1b. The miracle (Jn 11:1-44)

2b. The effect of the miracle (Jn 11:45-53)

- 1.) The effect on the people (11:45)
- 2.) The effect on the Pharisees (11:46-53)
- 3.) The effect on the movements of Jesus (11:54)

6a. Retreat to Ephraim (Jn 11:54)

At this point the travels of Jesus, with the exception of the final journey to His death at Jerusalem, are at an end. He tarries for a time in the little city of Ephraim, awaiting the time when He would go forth to be delivered up to death.

Focus #2: Friday – Sunday (Triumphal Entry) Sunday – a Day of Messianic PRESENTATION

Background: Jesus' very carefully planned journey to Jerusalem for the Passover

1a. Jesus and His disciples pass through Samaria and Galilee, intending to join the pilgrims traveling down the eastern side of the Jordan River, heading for Jerusalem to observe Passover (Lk 17:11)

1b. On the way, 10 lepers are healed (Lk 17:11-19)

2a. Jesus and His disciples fall in with a band of Pilgrims, travels with that multitude down the Jordan Rift toward Jerusalem; Jesus does much teaching and works some miracles along the way (Lk 17:20 – 19:28; Mk 10:1-52; Mt 19:1 – 20:34)



Friday/Saturday

3a. A quiet weekend at Bethany, in the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus

Note: concerning the location of the village of Bethany-

1b. Jesus arrives in Bethany on FRIDAY afternoon, amidst an air of great excitement over His appearance in Jerusalem (Jn 11:55-12:1)

Note: Because the Sabbath began at sundown on Friday, the multitude of pilgrims with whom Jesus had been traveling could not stop at Bethany; they had to go on into Jerusalem to find lodging. As they went into the city, they bore a very timely two-fold message to the masses gathering there:

1.)

2.)

2b. Jesus is served a feast by the people of Bethany; Mary anoints Jesus and is rebuked by Judas, but Jesus defends Mary and scolds Judas (Mt 26:6-13; Mk 14:3-9; Jn 12:2-8)

3b. Because of that rebuke, Judas devises a sinister plot (Mt 26:14-16; Mk 14:10,11; Lk 22:3-6)

Sunday: A Day of Messianic *Presentation*

4a. The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem as the promised and awaited Messiah (Mt 21:1-11; Mk 11:1-11; Lk 19:29-44; Jn 12:9-19)

Note: Background to the TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

- 1.) Old Testament prophets clearly foretold this event
 - a.) Zechariah 9:9 - the *manner* of the King's presentation had been foretold
 - b.) Daniel 9:25,26 - the *moment* of the King's presentation had been foretold
 - c.) Psalm 118:21-29 - the *meaning* of the King's presentation had been foretold
- 2.) Jesus Himself had clearly foretold this event. Just several weeks earlier, after Jesus had fled from Judea because of the murderous designs of the Pharisees, when some of those Pharisees came to Perea to entice Jesus back to Judea that they might take Him, Jesus had clearly stated that the citizens of Jerusalem would "...not see me until the time come that ye shall say, `Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord'" (Lk 13:31-35).
- 3.) By traveling along the way to Jerusalem with a band of Jewish pilgrims, and by working miracles and rebuking the Pharisees along that way, and then by stopping in Bethany and allowing the pilgrims to precede Him into Jerusalem, Jesus had accomplished two very strategic victories:
 - a.) He had heightened the excitement and fascination of the people, laying the groundwork for their behavior at the TRIUMPHAL ENTRY.
 - b.) He had effectively frustrated the murderous intent of the Sanhedrinists (cp. Jn 11:47-48, 53, 57; Lk 19:47-48; 20:19); those leaders of Judaism were anxious to arrest and execute Jesus, but could not because of His popularity with the multitudes.

Note: that popularity was, to be sure, only superficial and self-serving, but it nonetheless had the effect of protecting Jesus from the Sanhedrinists, and Jesus utilized that reality again and again.

1b. The praises of the pilgrims as Jesus approaches the city

2b. The Pharisees object to Jesus and He rebukes them (Lk 19:39-44)

3b. Jesus returns quietly to Bethany (Mt 21:17; Mk 11:11)

NOTE:

- 1.) The decision as to what to do with Jesus now rests with the leaders of the Jews; He has made clear for all to see the substance of His claims concerning Himself and the proof of those claims.
- 2.) It would have been easy for *us* to be deceived and to accept as genuine the words of acceptance offered by this multitude! However, subsequent events demonstrated the superficial - yea, the hypocritical character of those words.
- 3.) It was the pattern of Jesus' ministry to devise very practical and effective means to *test* the genuineness of the multitudes when they insisted that they were willing to accept Him as their Messiah
- 4.) As He had done before, Jesus devised a "litmus test" to reveal the true character of the apparent acceptance by the multitudes at His triumphal entry.

What was that "litmus test"? It was Jesus' possession of the temple on the next two days - and the devastating verbal defeat and rebuke He administered to the religious/Levitical leaders of the nation during those days.

Focus #3: Monday & Tuesday – Days of Messianic PROCLAMATION

1a. Monday – the focus is on *authority*

1b. The barren fig tree is cursed (Mt 21:18,19; Mk 11:12-14)

2b. The SECOND cleansing of the Temple



3b. Some Greeks would see Jesus; He foretells His death (Jn 12:20-50)

2a. Tuesday morning and afternoon – the focus is on *controversy*

1b. The barren fig tree found to have withered (Mt 21:19-22; Mk 11:19-26; Lk 21:37,38)

2b. A series of controversies with the leaders of the Jews

Note: As Jesus arrived in the city on Tuesday morning, He returned to the Temple and once again asserted His authority there; indeed, according to Mark's description of this two-day period, Jesus "would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple" (11:16). The Temple was, of course, crowded for the Passover season, and the leaders of Judaism were enraged at the actions of Jesus. However, because Jesus was so admired by those masses, and because those masses were so tired of being made merchandise of by those leaders (especially at Passover), the Pharisees and Sadducees were unable to take Jesus (cf. Mk 11:1-8). Lacking the opportunity to seize and execute Him, and frustrated by the fact that He was admired (if only superficially) by the masses, His enemies attempt to rescue the situation by approaching Him with difficult questions, hoping to catch Him in His words, embarrassing Him before the multitude and perhaps even finding some indictment they could take to the Romans in the attempt to have Him executed.

1c. Jesus' authority is challenged; He appeals to John's baptism to quiet His accusers, then speaks three hard parables (Mt 21:23-22:14; Mk 11:27-12:12; Lk 20:1-19).

Note:

1.) Notice how Jesus' enemies are *completely bested* before the assembled multitudes again and again throughout these temple controversies; this did nothing to ameliorate the hostility of the leaders toward Jesus. Cf. Mk 11:33; 12:12; 12:17; 12:34; Lk 20:20

2.) The three parables spoken here by Jesus were open and clear statements of condemnation upon the nation of Israel, and they were recognized as such by the rulers, though the common people at first missed the point (Mt 21:41-43; cf. Lk 20:15,16).

a.) The *rebellion* of the nation - the parable of the 2 sons (Mt 21:28-32)

b.) The *retribution* of the nation - the parable of the wicked husbandmen (Mt 21:33-46)

c.) The *rejection* of the nation - the parable of the wedding feast (Mt 22:1-14)

2c. Some Pharisees **and** Herodians (!!) approach Jesus to ask whether it is proper to pay tribute to Caesar; Jesus answers with an illustration drawn from a coin (Mt 22:15-22; Mk 12:13-17; Lk 20:20-26).

3c. The Sadducees (who rejected the concept of a resurrection and/or an after-life) approach Jesus with a favorite question concerning the resurrection; He answers them and rebukes them openly for their ignorance of the Scripture (Mt 22:23-33; Mk 12:18-27; Lk 20:27-40)

1.) Notice that Jesus finds biblical proof of the resurrection/after-life in the account of the burning bush (Ex 3).

2.) Note that the antagonism of the Sadducees developed because Jesus had now invaded *their* territory, the Temple. For many months, Jesus had been moving among the common people, and because that was the territory of the Pharisees, those Pharisees had been anxious to destroy Him. But the Sadducees had remained aloof. (To generate any official action, because of the majority held by the Sadducees on the Sanhedrin at this time, it was necessary to get those Sadducees involved.) Jesus had taken two steps to set in motion the attitudes of hatred and jealousy that would culminate in His death: first, the Triumphal Entry, when He was acclaimed by the common people (the domain of Pharisaic influence), had brought the hatred of the Pharisees to an intolerable level; second, His possession of the Temple and public humiliation of the officials there (the Temple being the domain of Sadducaic control), had brought the animosity of the Sadducees very quickly to an explosive point.

4c. A Pharisee asks a legal question: "Which is the greatest commandment?" (Mt 22:34-40; Mk 12:28-34)

5c. Jesus proves His Messiahship by means of an appeal to David (Ps 110)

6c. The last public discourse of Jesus: He denounces the Scribes and Pharisees in a series of "Woes" (Mt 23:1-39; Mk 12:38-40; Lk 20:45-47)

7c. Jesus comments on the widow's mite (Mk 12:41-44; Lk 21:1-4)

3b. The OLIVET DISCOURSE, delivered in response to the questions of His disciples as they left the city and viewed the Temple built by Herod. (Mt 24,25; Mk 13:1-37; Lk 21:5-36)

In the sermon deals, Jesus predicts the total destruction of Jerusalem; then, when His disciples ask Him concerning the "signs" of His coming, Jesus discusses at remarkable length His own Second Coming in Glory, and specifically with the conditions and signs which will immediately precede that glorious coming in power.

3a. Tuesday evening and night – the focus is on *sinister intrigue*

1b. Jesus privately foretells His crucifixion (Mt 26:1,2)

Note: The record makes it clear that throughout these last weeks of His ministry, Jesus was *carefully* and *repeatedly* foretelling His soon coming death. However, the New Testament makes it just as clear that the disciples refused to hear when He spoke of such things (cp. Lk 18:30-34).

2b. The Jews plot to kill Jesus *as soon as the feast season is passed* (Mt 26:3-5; Mk 14:1,2; Lk 22:1,2)

Note:

1.) The assembly described in Mt 26:3 is the Great Sanhedrin of Jerusalem.

2.) Notice what it was that caused the Sanhedrinists to wait until *after the Passover* to exercise their murderous passions (Lk Mt 26:5; Lk 22:2).

3b. Judas, stung by Jesus' rebuke at the feast in Bethany some five days earlier (i.e., last Friday), seeks out the Sanhedrin and bargains to betray Jesus to them (Mt 26:14-16; Mk 14:10-11; Lk 22:3-6)

Note:

1.) Both Matthew and Mark record that feast and the rebuke of Judas by Jesus which occurred at that feast in close connection with Judas' decision to betray Jesus; the point is clearly that it was that rebuke which so enraged the unregenerate heart of the counterfeit disciple that he took this most despicable step.

2) *Important:* Exactly what did Judas promise to do to enable the Sanhedrinists to take Jesus?

4a. Wednesday – a silent day in the biblical narrative (no record in the Gospels)

Note: Concerning the day of the week on which Jesus was crucified:

Focus #4: Thursday – a Day of Messianic PREPARATION

1a. Thursday Afternoon – preparation is made for the Paschal meal, to be held at a previously secured room (Mt 26:17-19; Mk 14:12-16; Lk 22:7-13)

Notice how Jesus instructed Peter and John to find the room where the meal was to be held. (Lk 22:7-13.) The very deliberate purpose in this--to hide the location from one who was looking for a time when He could report the whereabouts of Jesus to the Sanhedrinists, who were longing for an opportunity to take Jesus in **private**.

The home in which this Passover/Last Supper was most probably eaten: that of Mary, mother of John Mark. At any rate, it was the home of a wealthy family, located in the upper city - the western hill of the city of Jerusalem.

2a. Thursday evening (Jewish Friday) - Jesus partakes of the Passover meal with His disciples

Note: This is a very important night in the Passion Week; the four Gospels give us a rather complete description of this night's activities and teachings; those four accounts have to be pieced together to gain the fullest possible account of this night.

1b. Jesus rebukes His disciples for their jealousy and selfish ambition (Lk 22:24-30)

Notice the argument which arose as the disciples took their places around the table (Lk 22:24). This dispute was probably sparked by the struggle to seize the seats at the table nearest to the captain of the feast, Jesus. Compare Mt 19:28 – Jesus had told His disciples on the way up to the city for Passover that they would sit on 12 thrones ruling the 12 tribes of Israel; they were likely anticipating that kingdom assignments would be made at this time, and were jealous for the proudest tribes.

Notice Jesus' response to this dispute – Lk 22:25-30).

2b. During the Passover meal, Jesus washes the disciples' feet (Jn 13:1-20)

It was an offense to enter a feast room with soiled feet, and the owner of the house had provided a basin of water and towel so that feet could be washed as the men entered the room. But this was the task for a lowly servant, and the disciples were hoping to be assigned a noble tribe; they were reluctant to be seen as a servant at this feast. Now, reclining at the table, their soiled feet were plain to see. Jesus takes from the little time He had with His disciples to dramatically demonstrate the reality that he who would lead in the Kingdom of the Messiah must learn to give himself away in service to others.

3b. At the meal, Jesus points out Judas as the betrayer (Mt 26:21-25; Mk 14:18-21; Lk 22:21-23; Jn 13:21-30)

Remember that this occurred on Thursday night; it was on *Tuesday* night that Judas had sought out the Sanhedrinists and arranged to betray Jesus to them at a time when and place where He could be arrested apart from the multitudes (Lk 22:1-6). The act of betrayal had taken place there in the home of Caiaphas; the culmination of betrayal would occur several hours later, in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Jesus announced that the betrayer was at the table, and each of the apostles began to question whether it might be he. Peter, sitting on the far side of the table, beckoned to John to inquire of Jesus who it might be. John, reclining beside Jesus, leaned back and asked Jesus privately; Jesus told him it was the one to whom He gave a morsel. Probably some minutes later, Jesus handed a morsel to Judas (a gesture of courtesy and fraternity). The signal must have surprised and angered John (who alone had been told of the signal), but Jesus was there to restrain whatever impulse John might have felt to stop Judas. On the other hand, the act of special kindness so piqued the tormented soul of Judas that he made a lame excuse and departed to fetch the soldiers and Sanhedrinists who were waiting the word concerning the place where Jesus was.

4b. After Judas departs, Jesus warns concerning desertion, with special attention to Peter (Mt 26:31-35; Mk 14:27-31; Lk 22:31-38; Jn 13:31-38)

5b. The Lord's Supper is instituted (Mt 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25; Lk 22:17-20)

The bread & cup were part of the Paschal (Passover) meal, but in His presentation of the bread and the cup at this time, Jesus invested this particular ceremony with remarkable new meaning: it was to be a commemoration of His death, first of all; it was to be a perpetual picture of the fellowship the believer enjoys with God (a shared meal); it was to be a dramatic and compelling reminder of what was necessary for the "New Covenant" to become a reality; it was to be celebrated in anticipation of His coming again until the day of His appearance.

6b. The Farewell Discourse to His disciples in the upper room (Jn 14)

Only John records this discourse. Remember that these words were spoken just hours before the Lord's arrest and eventual crucifixion. Notice how abruptly the Lord brought this discourse to a close and departed the upper room (Jn 14:31). He knew that the betrayer had gone to fetch the soldiers and Sanhedrinists, that the arresting party would soon arrive. Jesus desired more time to instruct His disciples and to prepare His own soul/spirit in prayer, and so He leads them across the moon-lit city to a garden low on the western slope of the Mt of Olives.

Meanwhile, Judas doubtless led the cohort of soldiers (Jn 18:6) and the Sanhedrinists back to the upper room. When he discovered that room to be empty, perhaps in a bit of a panic, Judas led them to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus and twelve had often stayed (Lk 22:39; John 18:2). The place was evidently a private "hobby-farm" outside the walled city whose owner had given Jesus permission to use as a place to stay the night or to find solitude when in the busy city of Jerusalem.

3a. Late Thursday night (Jewish Friday) - Jesus & eleven apostles leave the upper room, go to Gethsemane

1b. The discourse on the way to Gethsemane - the True Vine, the Ministry of the Holy Spirit (Jn 15,16)

It was evidently at this time, as Jesus led the disciples out of the city, across the Kidron Valley, and over to the lower reaches of the Mount of Olives, that Peter once again insisted that he, above all the others, could be depended upon to stand by Jesus no matter what happened (Mt 26:31-35; Mk 14:27-31). Jesus repeated the prophecy of Peter's denial, and Peter became the more insistent. Note that the other disciples also insisted on their own individual fidelity (Mt 26:35).

2b. The "High-Priestly Prayer" of Jesus, spoken near the Garden of Gethsemane (Jn 17)

Somewhere low on the eastern slope of the temple mount, descending toward the Kidron and then to the Garden, Jesus stops and prays the blessed prayer of intercession recorded only in Jn 17.

3b. Jesus suffers long in agony in the Garden; the disciples could not watch with Him (Mt 26:30,36-46; Mk 14:26, 32-42; Lk 22:39-46; Jn 18:1)

Shortly after the prayer of intercession, as Jesus walks across the valley Kidron toward Gethsemane, He steps across the Brook Kidron (Jn 18:1) – the brood into which the drainage channels and conduits beneath the temple dumped the refuse which would drain all the way to the Dead Sea. Just a few hours earlier, tens of thousands of lambs had been slain; that brook was certainly running red with the run-off of that sacrificial carnage. Every drop of sacrificial blood spilled in the temple that day was only anticipatory of His own blood, to be shed in just a few hours. It is a poignant insight John gives us as he pictures Jesus stepping across that scarlet stream;

Jesus left eight disciples at the entrance of the Garden, and took the "inner three" with Him to the inner recesses of the enclosed place. Three times Jesus went to prayer to His Father, and each time the prayer is the same: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will but thy will be done!" Compare the note of John the Apostle concerning Jesus' statement at the time of His arrest, and especially concerning His resolve to drink the cup which His Father had given Him (John 18:10, 11)

*As Jesus emerges from the Garden after that season of prayer before His Father,
the Sanhedrinists will arrive to arrest Him.*

*By early the next morning, Jesus will have endured six distinguishable "trials,"
and as a result of those trials will have been adjudged a criminal
worthy of capital punishment.*

*By 9:00 on Friday morning, Jesus will be hanging on a cross
on a small hill outside a main gate on the north side of the city of Jerusalem.
He will be executed between two thieves, the object of undisguised and rabid derision and contempt,
dying in unimaginable ignominy and torment.*

The serpent had bruised the heel of the woman's seed.

*But before the dawning of the first day of the following week,
that borrowed tomb in which the body of Jesus had lain was found empty.*

*For forty days, Jesus walked among men,
showing Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs.*

*Then He mounted up on high in the clouds of heaven, ascending to His Father,
where He sits even today at the right hand of the Exalted One,
ever living to make intercession for His own.*

Death has lost its sting!

The grave has been swallowed up in victory!

The Seed of woman has crushed the head of the Tempter!

Focus #5: Friday – A Day of Messianic PERFECTION

- 1a. Friday morning (long before dawn) – Jesus is betrayed, arrested & forsaken (Mt 26:47-56; Mk 14:43-52; Lk 22:47-53; Jn 18:2-12)
 - 1b. Jesus is betrayed by Judas (Mt 26:47-49)
 - 1c. The probable chain of events that led to this time:
 - 2c. Judas had arranged a signal, as there were probably those among the soldiers, on "loan" from the Romans to the temple authorities, who would not have recognized Jesus by face.
 - 2b. Jesus is arrested (Mt 26:50-55; Lk 22:49-53)
 - 1c. The disciples attempt to protect Jesus with a "sword," and Peter smites the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear; Jesus rebukes Peter, miraculously restores the ear of the servant (!!!), and then is taken.
 - 2c. Jesus goes on to make it clear that these things must happen in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled (Mt 26:53,54).
 - 3b. Jesus is forsaken by the eleven (Mt 26:56b)

2a. Friday morning (before and after dawn) – Jesus is tried by the Jewish leadership

Note: There are three stages to the trials of Jesus before the Jews. This did not happen spontaneously; the Sanhedrin had laid careful plans and made elaborate preparation to assure that the desired result would be accomplished very quickly once the hated miracle-worker had finally been taken.

- 1b. The first stage: Jesus is examined by Annas, the former high priest (Jn 18:12-14, 19-23)
- 2b. The second stage: a hasty, informal trial before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin; Jesus is condemned, mocked, and buffeted (Mt 26:57, 59-68; Mk 14:53, 55-65; Lk 22:63-65; Jn 18:24)
 - 1c. This "trial" was illegal by every standard of Jewish jurisprudence, and thus Jesus remained silent as accusations were hurled against Him. And yet, even with this determination, the Sanhedrinists were unable to construct a case against Jesus (Mk 14:55,56); even the much used charge that Jesus had threatened to destroy the Temple was insufficient (Mk 14:57-59).
 - 2c. Finally, when asked under oath if He did indeed claim to be Messiah, the very God, He affirmed the charge, adding that the day would come when He would powerfully demonstrate the truth of that claim when He comes in infinite power! This was taken as demonstration that He deserved to be executed; He was mocked, buffeted, and taken off to a dungeon to await the dawn, when the verdict would be "validated" and the sentence executed.
- 3c. After the Sanhedrin had condemned Jesus, as they waited for the dawn, when they could convene officially and endorse this decision, the members of Sanhedrin mocked and buffeted the Lord (Mt 26:67,68; Mk 14:65).

MEANWHILE, Peter was in the courtyard denying his Lord

(Mt 26:58, 69-75; Mk 14:54, 66-72; Lk 22:54-62; Jn 18:15-18, 25-27).

As Jesus was led from the house to the dungeon He heard Peter's third denial; the Lord looked upon him who had so vigorously protested his superior loyalty, and Peter fled with a broken heart (Lk 22:60-62).

- 3b. The third stage: *after dawn*, Jesus is formally condemned by the Sanhedrin (Mt 27:1; Mk 15:1; Lk 22:66-71)

MEANWHILE, the remorse and suicide of Judas (Mt 27:3-10; Ac 1:18,19)

3a. Friday morning (shortly after dawn) – Jesus is tried by the Romans

1b. Before Pilate the first time; Jesus remains silent before the Procurator (Mt 27:2, 11-14; Mk 15:1-5; Lk 23:1-5; Jn 18:28-38)

1c. Jesus is taken to the "hall of judgment" very early (Jn 18:28)

2c. At first, the Jews attempted to get Pilate to condemn Jesus without so much as a charge against Him; they expected Pilate to accept the very fact that they brought this One to him as ample evidence of His guilt and worthiness of death (Jn 18:29,30); however, Pilate would have none of that (18:31).

1d Notice that the problem faced by the Sanhedrinists is well expressed in Jn 18:31b.

2d Notice further that by thus forcing the Jews to depend upon Rome to carry out the execution, our Lord accomplished His purpose of dying the "kind of death" (John 12:33) which would result in all men being drawn to Him (Jn 3:18; 12:32).

3c. Pilate took Jesus alone into the Judgment Hall, and there interrogated Him (Jn 18:33-38a)

The conclusion of Pilate: he brought Jesus back out to the multitude and declared, "I find in Him no fault at all" (Jn 18:38). This is the first of five distinct times that Pilate explicitly states the innocence of Jesus.

4c. When Pilate announced this finding to the Jews, they were enraged.

2b. Before Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch of Galilee: Jesus remains silent, in spite of the accusations hurled against Him (Lk 23:6-12)

3b. Before Pilate a second time; the Procurator treacherously surrenders to the demand of the Sanhedrin that Jesus be executed (Mt 27:15-26; Mk 15:6-15; Lk 23:13-25; Jn 18:39-19:16)

1c. Barnabas is released

2c. In connection with this, a message from Pilate's wife reached him, exhorting him not to allow the execution of this one called Jesus (Mt 27:19).

3c. Jesus is scourged.

4c. Finally, in desperation, Pilate consents to the demand of the Jews

Note: The soldiers then took the ignominy even further; they placed a crown of thorns upon Jesus' head, clothed Him with a robe of royal hue, and continued to mock and smite Him (Jn 19:2,3). Pilate allowed this barbarity to go on, and when Jesus had obviously endured much, he presented Him to the multitude (Jn 19:4,5)

4a. Friday (about 6:00 – 9:00 am) – The Roman soldiers mock Jesus (Mt 27:27-30; Mk 15:16-19)

A short time was necessary to make preparations for the crucifixion; during this time Jesus was remanded to the Roman officers, who called their fellows together and engaged in vicious mockery of the condemned man.

5a. Friday (about 9:00 am) – Jesus on the way to Golgotha (Mt 27:31-34; Mk 15:20-23; Lk 23:26-33; Jn 19:16,17)

1b. As they set out for the place of crucifixion, to the north of the walls of Jerusalem, Jesus was compelled to carry His cross; He was so debilitated by the sufferings already endured that another had to be called to assist Him with the burden (Mt 27:32).

2b. Although the disciples had forsaken Christ and fled, there followed Jesus at this time "a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him" (Lk 23:27). Jesus turned to these and warned them to "weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children" (Lk 23:38).

3b. When Jesus arrived at Golgotha, He was offered a narcotic, but He refused it (Mt 27:34). Luke notes at this point in the narrative that there were two "malefactors" were to be crucified with Jesus, "one on the right hand and one on the left" (Lk 23:33).

6a. Friday (about 9:00 am – 3:00 pm) – The crucifixion of Jesus the Christ

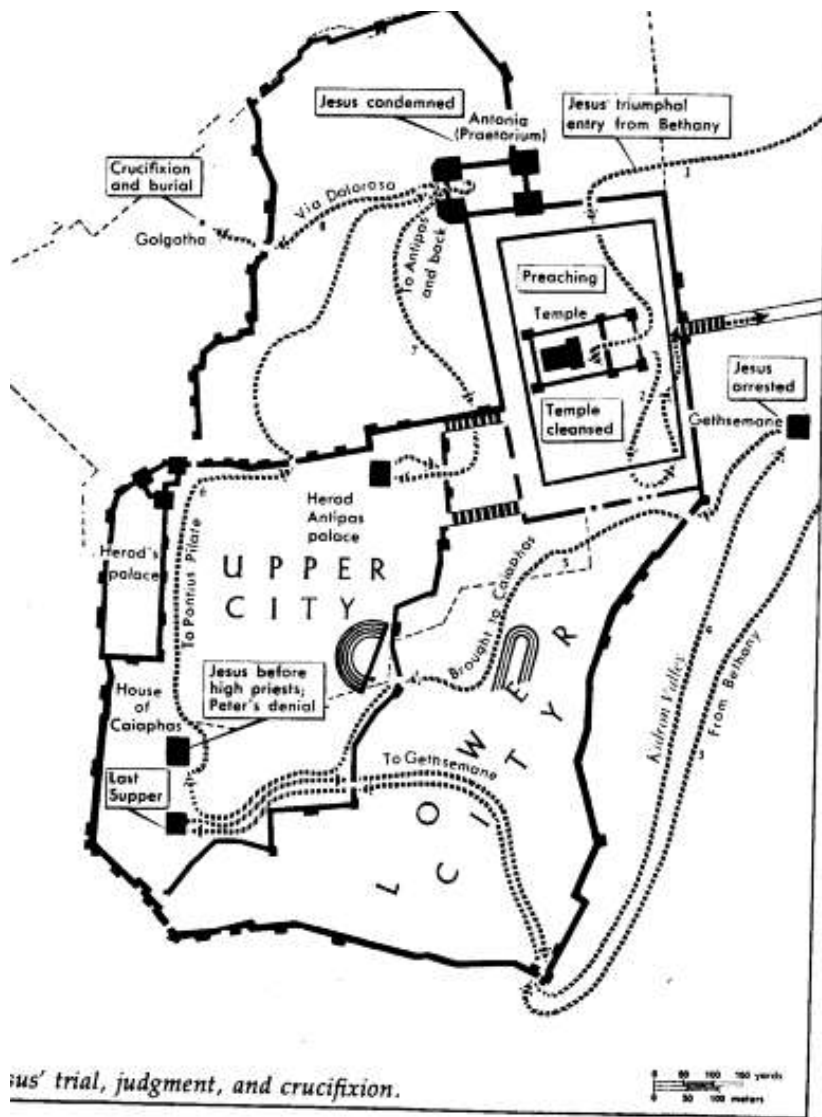
- 1b. The first three hours on the cross (9:00 a.m. - noon) (Mt 27:35-44; Mk 15:24-32; Lk 23:33-43; Jn 19:18-27)
 - 1c. As Jesus was raised on the cross, the Jews noticed the superscription which Pilate had caused to be placed above Him; they insisted he modify it, but he refused (Jn 19:19-22).
 - 2c. During these hours Jesus speaks three times:
 - 1.) A word of compassion for His enemies: *"Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!"*
 - 2.) A word of compassion for the repentant thief: *"Today thou shalt be with me in paradise."*
 - 3.) A word of compassion for His mother: *"Woman, behold thy son,"* ...to John, *"Behold thy mother."*
 - 3c. During this time, Roman soldiers cast lots for the garment of Jesus (Mt 27:35, cp Ps 22:18)
 - 4c. Many of the onlookers railed on Jesus even as He hung on the cross (Lk 23:35-37).
- 2b. The three hours of darkness (noon - 3:00 p.m.)
 - 1c. During this time, Jesus speaks four more times:
 - 1.) A cry of horror: *"My God, My God! Why hast thou forsaken me!?"* (Mt 27:46)
 - 2.) A cry of torment: *"I thirst!"* (Jn 19:28)
 - 3.) A cry of victory: *"It is finished!"* (Jn 19:30)
 - 4.) A cry of commitment: *"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!"* (Lk 23:46)
 - 2c. The death of the God-Man (Mt 27:50; Mk 15:37; Lk 23:46; Jn 19:30)
- 3b. Physical phenomena at the time of the death of Jesus
 - 1c. The veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies was rent in two, from top to bottom (Mt 27:51)
 - 2c. There was an earthquake (Mt 27:51)
 - 3c. Graves in the area of Jerusalem were opened and "many bodies of saints which slept arose;" after the resurrection of Christ, these went into the city and "appeared unto many" (Mt 27:52,53)

Notice one effect of all this: Mt 27:54

6a. Friday (before sundown) – The burial of the body of Jesus, after proof of His death
(Mt 27:57-60; Mk 15:42-46; Lk 23:50-54; Jn 19:31-42)

- 1b. The Roman soldiers came to break the legs of the victims to hasten death; when they did so they discovered that Jesus was already dead (Jn 19:33)
 - 2b. As further proof that Jesus was dead, the soldiers pierced His side (Jn 19:34; cf. Zech 12:10)
 - 3b. Two courageous Sanhedrinists--Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea--came forward to identify with Jesus and to claim His body for burial (Mk 15:42-47; Jn 19:41, 42)
 - 4b. The next day the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate to demand that the tomb of Jesus be sealed "lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead; so that the last error shall be worse than the first" (Mt 27:64). Pilate complied, and thus was the theory that Jesus' body was stolen rendered untenable by His enemies.
- 7a. The watch of the women by the tomb of Jesus (Mt 27:61; Mk 15:47; Lk 23:55,56)
Jesus was buried sometime before sundown on Friday; His body lay in the tomb all of Saturday (the Jewish Sabbath), and He resurrected sometime before sunrise on Sunday. Throughout the time the body of Jesus lay in the sepulcher, the women maintained a vigil during those hours when such was appropriate.

Note: This map traces the travels of Jesus on the last night/day of His mortal life.



1. The heavy black lines (with towers indicated) represent the walls of the city in the days of Jesus.
2. The much lighter dotted lines (discernible most easily on the northern side of the city) represent the walls of the modern city (AD 1540). **Notice the location of Golgotha relative to these two wall systems.**
3. The elements of the map which are most certain:
 - ° The route of Jesus' triumphal entry (coming from Bethany to the site of the final Passover)
 - ° The site of the final Passover/Last Supper, on the Western Hill of the city
 - ° The site of Gethsemane, where Jesus went late on Friday (#4), and where He was arrested
 - ° The relative location of the high priest's home (also on the Western Hill, where Jesus was taken when He was arrested)
 - ° The site of Golgotha, the place of execution

5. The elements which are the least certain:
 - ° The route taken by Jesus from Bethany to the place of the Last Supper (#3), and the route taken from the place of the Last Supper to the Garden of Gethsemane (#4). [The issue is the gate through which Jesus and the disciples might have passed at that hour of the early morning. The chart assumes the Dung Gate, near the Pool of Siloam, but there is no way to be certain.]
 - ° The place where Jesus was taken to appear before Pontius Pilate. [The diagram assumes Pilate stayed in the Fortress Antonia when in Jerusalem. This is the basis of the Via Dolorosa as it is remembered today. However, most scholarship favors Herod's Palace, near today's Jaffa Gate (Citadel of David), as the place where the Roman procurator would have made his home when in Jerusalem.]

thus to which Jesus would have been taken briefly to appear before the Roman officer of the region of Galilee (#7). [Most surmise that Herod, too, would have been given quarters somewhere in the complex of Herod's Palace.]

° The "Via Dolorosa" (#8). [If Pilate's quarters were in Herod's Palace, the route to Golgotha would have been completely different.]

Focus #6: Sunday – a Day of Messianic PRONOUNCEMENT

Sunday morning (before & shortly after the dawn)

- 1a. The women set out for the tomb to anoint Jesus' body, very early in the day (Mt 28:1; Mk 16:1)
 - 1b. Remember that at sundown on Saturday, the first day of the week began by Jewish reckoning. Sometime before sunrise the following morning, Jesus walked alive from that tomb. Thus, Jesus' resurrection had already occurred when these women approached the tomb very early on Sunday morning.
 - 2b. These women were evidently bringing spices they had prepared (Lk 23:56) in order to show their devotion to Christ by anointing His corpse.
- 2a. The earthquake, the rolling away of the stone, the fright of the soldiers (Mt 28:2-4)

This evidently occurred before the women arrived at the tomb, perhaps even as they were on their way there. Probably the only eyewitnesses to this work of the angel (not "The Angel of the Lord," but "an angel...") were the Roman soldiers who had been posted to prevent the disciples from stealing the body (cp Mt 27:62-66). Those soldiers "did shake, and became as dead men" when the angel arrived to fulfill his liberating task.
- 3a. The women arrive at the tomb SUNDAY MORNING and hear the angel's glad message (Mt 28:5-8; Mk 16:2-8; Lk 24:18; Jn 20:1)
 - 1b. The angel gave the women a two-fold instruction (Mt 28:7): first, to go tell the disciples of the resurrection of the Lord; and second, to proceed to Galilee where Jesus would meet with them **as He had instructed them before His passion** (Mt 26:32).
 - 2b. Notice the very special word of invitation issued to Peter at this time (Mk 16:7).
- 4a. The women report to the apostles; Peter and John visit the tomb (Lk 24:9-12; Jn 20:2-10)
 - 1b. Notice the reaction of the eleven to the words of the women: "their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." The New Testament is absolutely clear in establishing the fact that those closest to Jesus, the eleven believing disciples, simply did not believe the prophecies of Jesus concerning His own resurrection.
 - 2b. Peter and John set off in a footrace to the tomb.
 - 3b. Notice that up to this point in the narrative Jesus has personally appeared to no one.

“He showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs...”

(The post-resurrection ministry of Jesus Christ on this earth)

1a. Five appearances on the day of His resurrection

1b. To Mary Magdalene; a message to the disciples (Mk 16:9-11; Jn 20:11-18)

2b. To the other women ((Mt 28:9,10)

(Meanwhile, some of the soldiers report to the Jewish authorities what has come to pass) [Mt 28:11-15]

3b. To Simon Peter (Lk 24:33-35)

Note: The appearance to Simon Peter is not narrated anywhere in the New Testament record; it is simply alluded in Lk 24:33-35 – by which point it has already occurred – and in 1 Cor 15:5.

4b. To two disciples traveling to Emmaus; Jesus teaches from the Old Testament Scriptures the doctrine of the death and resurrection of the promised Messiah (Mk 16:12,13; Lk 24:13-32)

5b. To the astonished disciples [Thomas is absent at this time] (Mk 16:14; Lk 24:36-43; Jn 20:19-25)

2a. Five appearances during the subsequent 40-day ministry

1b. To the disciples again; Thomas is present and convinced (Jn 20:26-31)

2b. To seven disciples beside the Sea of Galilee; a miraculous catch of fishes (John 21:1-23)

Note: It is at this time that Peter is *reinstated* and *re-commissioned*, and that that same apostle was forewarned concerning the death which he would be called upon to suffer.

3b. To above 500 brethren gathered in Galilee; a “great” commission is given them to be obeyed during the absence of the Lord (Mt 28:16-20; Mk 16:15-18)

4b. To James, the half-brother of Jesus (1 Cor 15:7)

Again, this encounter is nowhere narrated, but it is alluded to in 1 Cor 15:7 and assumed in a number of ways in the New Testament. It seems that this was probably the conversion experience of James. Further, it may be assumed that perhaps at this same time the resurrected Lord appeared to His other half-brothers, including Jude.

5b. To the assembled disciples, who are given instructions to tarry in Jerusalem until the promise of the Spirit is fulfilled (Lk 24:44-49)

Note: This promise relates to Old Testament prophecies of the *New Covenant* (Ezek 36; Jer 33) and to later prophecies spoken by John the Baptist (Jn 1).

"I go to my Father, and ye see me no more." (Jn 16:9)

(The ascension of Jesus to the Father)

1a. The last appearance and ascension to the Father (from Mt. Olivet, between Jerusalem and Bethany) (Mk 16:19; Lk 24:50,51; cp Ac 1:3-11)

2a. The disciples return to Jerusalem to await the promise of the Holy Spirit (Mk 16:20; Lk 24:52,53; cp Ac 1:12-14)